

ODDITIES IN SHANGHAI

The Funny Things One Sees
in
Smiling Round the World

By
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When I first arrived in Shanghai it was something of a shock to hear our honorable consul general say to the boy when sending upstairs for a friend to come down to my room, "Boy, go topside, look-see can ketchee Mr. M. Sposie have got, tellee come down-side," to which the boy answered as seriously, "Can do," and disappeared.

A story is told in Shanghai of a Russian diplomat who fell in love with a charming German lady. Unfortunately neither could speak the other's language and were at a standstill as to how they were going to conduct the love-making. They could both talk pigeon English, however, and fell back on that. When anyone in China makes a contract they say "Can puttee in book," so the Russian, looking unutterable love at his fair lady, cooed softly, "My likee you—spossee you likee my, can puttee in book?" To which she shyly answered, "Can do," and they were married.

Chen Dong, head boy in the dining room of the Astor House, who is quite a famous character in the east and known to everyone, still talked the ridiculous pigeon English, though he could speak very good English. He had, by his ingratiating and smiling civilities, accumulated a fortune of \$15,000, a princely sum for one of his class and, though he denied it roundly, was said to possess eight wives.

One thing surprised me very much, and that was the sharp line drawn be-

The stage is merely a raised platform with a row of gas lights across the front, each little jet blinking forlornly at the top of a piece of pipe that sticks bravely up for four or five inches. Another row of lights is over the stage, and at the back two curtained doorways complete the entire stage arrangements.

At the back of the stage between the doorways sits the orchestra, a collection of nerve-racking instruments, that shriek and wheeze and bang, especially upon the entrance of prominent actors.

The play begins at seven, and shortly after that time the tables on the ground floor are fully occupied by Chinese sipping the tea that is an inevitable part of every entertainment, social call or business meeting.

One dollar, Mexican, pays the entrance fee, entitles one to a place at one of the tables, a program and tea all the evening. Extra refreshments, such as fruit, nuts, sweets and the ubiquitous melon seed, are charged at the rate of 20 cents a bowl.

The attendants who keep renewing the tea cups do so by adding hot water, never more tea, but the pinch of tea leaves in the bottom of each cup seem to possess wonderful powers of endurance.

In the balcony, that contains the best seats, for which extra charge is made, people sit by the railing, which is broadened out into a sort of table. On this they lean, and place their tea and refreshments.

The waiters walk about on a narrow platform outside of the balcony rail, dispensing the hot water and eatables, occasionally passing around napkins scalding hot with steam, that are considered very refreshing for wiping the hands and face.

Chinamen and their wives attend the theater together, the only public place where a man is seen with his wife. She is always spoken of by him as "my little stay-at-home," when he doesn't politely refer to her as "my dull thorn" or "my stupid one."

I saw one Chinese lady, richly dressed and thickly painted, sitting demurely beside her imposing looking husband. She was smoking a beautiful gold water pipe that my Chinese friend assured me cost no less than \$300 in gold, or nearly \$600 Mexican.

A strange distinction is made by serving with special cups women who

usefulness is over, and it must give way to the next scenic representation, which will be arranged as the need for it arises.

When an actor dies or is slain in combat he has a most impressive death scene, wriggling all over the stage, to the great delight of the audience, who do not seem to perceive any incongruity when he gets up, after he is thoroughly dead, even to the last little shiver, and calmly walks off.

The actors either wear masks of painted silk or gauze, or else paint their own faces with water colors and a brush until all semblance of a human face is obliterated.

There are no actresses, men assuming every part. When they make up for



Tells Just What He Is Going to Do.

women they wear wigs and put blocks of wood under their feet to counterfeit the proper walk of ladies swaying along on their "Golden Lilies," as the Chinese admirably style the dreadful little hoof-like feet a Chinese woman spends years of torture in obtaining.

Vaudeville, composed of acrobats, magicians and imitators, sometimes varies the performance.

Approval is not shown by clapping the hands, but by grunts of different modulation.

There are numerous traveling theatrical companies in China, and these generally pitch their tents in the temple courts, thus affording the people opportunity to kill two birds with one stone and combine amusement with religion.

If one can endure a Chinese theater until the end of the performance, the deafening orchestra, and the falsetto voices, he will find that two ushers come to the front of the stage and announce that the play is finished. Chinese plays never end in any culminating climax, indicating to the people that all is ended, so this announcement is really necessary.

The plays generally abound in preposterous heroes and characters, though occasionally a scene of home life will be represented, giving a foreigner an insight into customs, absolutely unattainable in any other way.

But with their faces painted out of all human semblance, their exaggerated and unnatural voices, walk and manner, together with a constant jumble of properties and stage hands, with their feeble make-believes, combine in producing a most amusing and absurd ensemble.

We were not altogether sorry that we had endured unto the end, though the boredom was beyond anything I can remember. We kept our seats, mentally classing ourselves with the caller who, with a winning smile, said to the little girl who occupied the study while her father, an eminent literary man, was at dinner:

"I suppose, my dear, that you assist your papa by entertaining the bores?"

"Yes, sir," replied the little girl, gravely, "please be seated."

I know of only one thing in China that is funnier, and that is a practice drill of soldiers, which may actually be seen within 200 miles of Shanghai.

Here they use weapons of a pattern as ancient as the first Crusaders, spears with triple points and battle axes on long poles. A row of soldiers armed with these antique curios stand behind a row squatting on their heels and armed with rifles of the vintage of the American civil war. In front of these a third row of men lie flat like sharpshooters, also armed with the same venerable firearms.

When the word of command is given they "make ready" and "take aim," but at the word "fire!" not a trigger is pulled, each man says "boom!" with that sublime indifference to the ridiculous and childlike faith in make-believe that distinguishes the theaters.

When an officer was asked why such a performance was allowed he said it kept the men busy and under discipline and didn't waste powder.

To see a whole company of men go through this absurd performance again and again as soberly and conscientiously as if really shooting is the most excruciatingly funny thing to be seen in China, compared to which the theater is a poor second.

HERE'S NEW TERROR

STARTLING MENACE TO CONNU-BIAL FELICITY DISCOVERED.

Experiment Successfully Made by New Jersey Man Threatens Terrible Possibilities—New Properties Found in Salt Water.

If Richard Tague of South Amboy, N. J., had followed the advice of the popular song and told his troubles to the pieceman, he might not have known so much in the long run, but he would have been a sight happier.

There had been a slight domestic fracas because Tague had shown an unreasonable jealousy, according to his wife, and so he was a-walking the streets, pondering whether he should drown himself or go home and thrash his wife.

At this psychological moment a sailor-man crossed his path and in the subsequent maneuvering they became chummy. Tague told his tale of woe; the Ancient Mariner prescribed a remedy. He was a salt of the old school, one who had followed the sea long before the days of "tin-kettle sailors." In his wanderings he had touched many ports, met many strange peoples, and a wealth of mysterious knowledge was hidden beneath his wind-worn cap. He whispered, in Tague's starboard ear: Tague shook his head approvingly, and the twain sheered off.

That night when Mrs. Tague, a bit tired by a two-hour Cuddle lecture, slept heavily, her husband procured a basin of salt water and placed her hands in it. After which he retired. For a time she just babbled. Then her speech clarified and began to spout. She told all the anxious listener wished to know of her life, before she met him and since. So much, indeed, that he straightway filed an application for divorce.

This strange uncorking property of salt, which we commend to the investigating eye of Prof. Hyslop and Sir Oliver Lodge, must be looked into at once. It holds in the present incomplete knowledge of it, too great a menace to all married men. The Ancient Mariner didn't tell Tague how brine affected the masculine tongue, and Tague was too much concerned with its effect on women to question him about it. Until its absolute innocuousness towards man is shown, however, husbands will have to walk warily. Of what avail will be the tale of the sick friend, the lodge meeting, the unprecedented business activity at the office, if the—ahem—untruth of any or all these tales can be determined by a judicious soaking of the husband's hands in salt water?—Cleveland Leader.

Tied Up the Gallaghers.

Lightning has played some queer pranks, but about the funniest joke a streak of it ever got off was when it bumped into old William Gallagher of Cleveland. Mr. Gallagher was peacefully in bed when the bolt hit his domicile and the fluid completely wrecked the iron bedstead in which the old man and his wife were sleeping. Worse than that it twisted the clothes and the iron about the couple in such curious fashion that they were actually tied in bed, and, to save themselves, couldn't get out, while the rain beat in on them from the wrecked roof. Finally their shouts brought the neighbors and Gallagher and Mrs. Gallagher were released from old Jupiter's iron clutch, wet and scared and exhausted. The bedstead with the clothes twisted about its sides is a curious object of interest in Cleveland to this day.

Her Chance to Come.

Mrs. Newliwed—I baked this cake this morning. Mrs. Naybor gave me the recipe for it.

Mr. Newliwed—Never mind, dear; just bide your time and some day you'll have revenge on her.—Philadelphia Press.

Little Difference.

One of the attaches to the American embassy at London tells a good story at the expense of a well-known journalist at the British capital.

The journalist had suddenly been called upon to write an obituary notice of the late Bret Harte. He sat down full of enthusiasm for his subject and with what seemed to him a pretty complete knowledge, and the result was a glowing article. He fired it to the printer; and when it came back to him he was appalled to find that he had written a column or so about Mark Twain. Time pressed, however, as only a few minutes remained in which to get the article into the paper. So he simply changed the book titles and let it go.—Illustrated Sunday Magazine.

Still Another Excuse.

"Are you willing to chop some wood for your dinner?"

"Lady," answered Pledging Pete, "I'm interested in de preservation of the forests, an' it would be agin me principles to put an ax into one of de trees, even though he lay prostrate at me feet."

FROM SUNNY ORANGE GROVES.

The Twice-Told Experience of a San Bernardino, Calif., Man.

From Sunny San Bernardino, in the midst of orange groves, writes Lionel M. Heath, of 163 Eighth Street: "For fifteen years I suffered with pains in my back, frequent calls to pass the secretions, dropsy, rheumatic aches and other symptoms of kidney trouble. I could get no relief until I used Doan's Kidney Pills. They cured me five years ago, and this is twice I have publicly said so. The cure was thorough."

Sold by all dealers, 50 cents a box. Foster-Milburn Co., Buffalo, N. Y.

Misunderstood.

Visitor—What lovely cut glass you have, Mrs. Chump.

Mrs. Chump (Indignantly)—They hadn't a bit of that cut. We paid full price for all of it. We don't have to go to no bargain sales.

THE COME AND SEE SIGN



This sign is permanently attached to the front of the main building of the Lydia E. Pinkham Medicine Company, Lynn, Mass.

What Does This Sign Mean? It means that public inspection of the Laboratory and methods of doing business is honestly desired. It means that there is nothing about the business which is not "open and above-board."

It means that a permanent invitation is extended to anyone to come and verify any and all statements made in the advertisements of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. Is it a purely vegetable compound made from roots and herbs—without drugs?

Come and See. Do the women of America continually use as much of it as we are told? Come and See.

Was there ever such a person as Lydia E. Pinkham, and is there any Mrs. Pinkham now to whom sick women are asked to write? Come and See.

Is the vast private correspondence with sick women conducted by women only, and are the letters kept strictly confidential? Come and See.

Have they really got letters from over one million, one hundred thousand women correspondents? Come and See.

Have they proof that Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has cured thousands of these women? Come and See.

This advertisement is only for doubters. The great army of women who know from their own personal experience that no medicine in the world equals Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound for female ills will still go on using and being benefited by it; but the poor doubting, suffering woman must, for her own sake, be taught confidence, for she also might just as well regain her health.

SICK HEADACHE



Positively cured by these Little Pills. They also relieve Discomfort from Dyspepsia, Indigestion and Too Heavy Eating. A perfect remedy for Bile, Nervousness, Headache, Dizziness, Bad Taste in the Mouth, Coated Tongue, Pain in the Side, TORPID LIVER. They regulate the Bowels. Purely Vegetable.

SMALL PILL, SMALL DOSE, SMALL PRICE.

Genuine Must Bear Fac-Simile Signature. REFUSE SUBSTITUTES.



PEOPLE SIT BY THE RAILING WHICH IS BROADENED OUT INTO A SORT OF TABLE.

tween the natives and the white people. No matter how high a Chinaman's rank, there are certain clubs and hotels where he would not be admitted, and I was astonished and hurt to find that I would not be allowed to entertain at tiffin in my hotel a Chinese friend of mine who was of high official standing, a graduate of Yale and a charming gentleman.

It seemed an unfair law, when at the next table to mine was a party of ill-bred Japanese, who gurgled their soup and made other unpleasant

are notorious. The attendants are supposed to know them all, and when they come in attended by their Chinese gallants, instead of receiving their tea in the flowered cups that everyone else has, they are served in cups of plain green china.

The play is well under way when we enter, and painted and gorgeously robed actors are shrieking (apparently out of the top of their heads) in falsetto voices.

The progress of the play is highly amusing to a foreigner, for, there being no curtain, the action is never interrupted even though the stage hands are on the stage quite as much as the actors.

This seems at first rather a useless performance, but after awhile one realizes that if an actor didn't give some idea of who he was, and what he intended to do, it would be difficult to pick him out and follow his performance amid the confusion and bustle of stage hands arranging or removing properties and make-believe scenic effects.

Though there is no scenery there are crude attempts at properties. For instance, a piece of muslin laid down to represent a river; a curtain hung from two bamboo poles held by coolies is a temple gate; draped chairs and tables are rocks and mountains, and a boat is made of two chairs with a pit of cloth stretched between.

When an actor is supposed to enter on horseback he prances in, curvetting handsomely. The whole performance is singularly reminiscent of childish days, when "let's pretend" turned everything into exciting realities.

When the actor has informed the audience what he is going to do he retires, and then makes his proper entrance, going through all the details as he has promised them. As he climbs over the mountains, or gets out of his boat, the stage hands quickly remove them, or, should he enter the temple gate, it immediately walks off, for its



He Prances in Curvetting Handsomely.

noises not usually associated with polite table manners.

I found that in point of advancement in the drama the Chinese could not be compared with the Japanese.

In fact, there is no staging or acting at all, in the sense that we understand it.